



I4-GREEN

I4-GREEN OPEN CALL GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS



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This document contains the information related to the I4-GREEN competitive open call. Please also check the complete Open Call package (<https://i3-i4green.eu/index.php/opencall/>).

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ABOUT I4-GREEN

I4-GREEN is an industry-driven project wishing to deploy regional circular economy innovations in the mining processes

Enabling access to raw materials is a crucial requisite for ensuring Europe's recovery and is essential to preserve and further improve the environment and the life quality, while they are crucial to Europe's economy due to the current deep raw materials crisis.

I4-GREEN is stemmed from an interregional innovation network and will scale into a unique interregional ecosystem, real node for the green transformation of extractive industries and the emergence of an EU sustainable mining value chain (Figure 1). It will generate advanced and forefront sustainable and environmentally friendly processing recovery technologies, becoming a lighthouse of low environmental impact, incorporating circular economy strategies and financial support into SMEs working on securing the sustainable supply of minerals essential to meet EU resilience and Green Energy Transition.

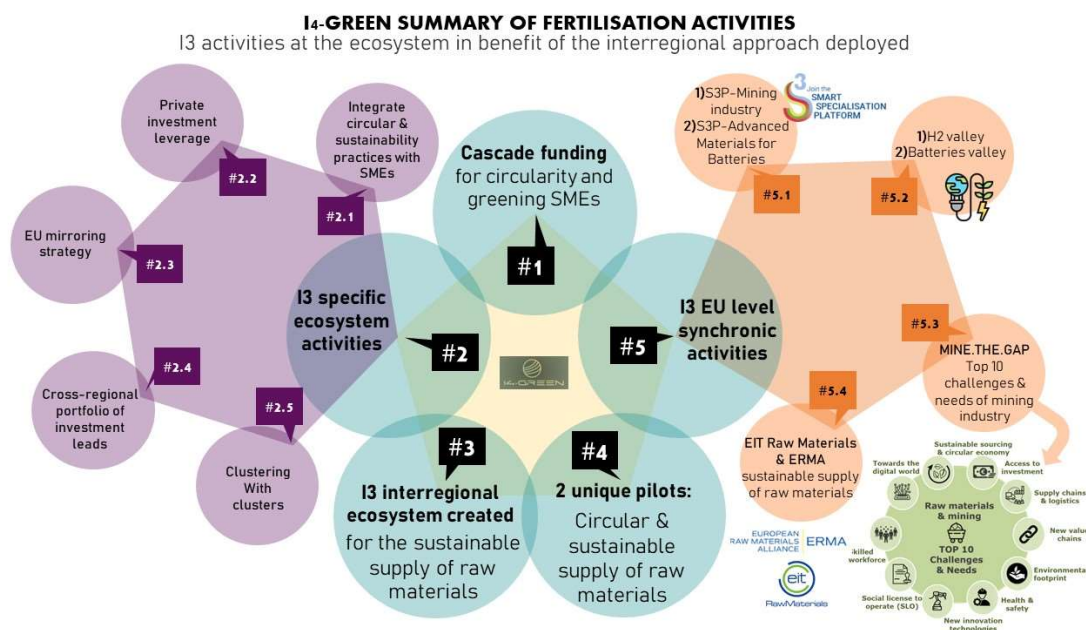


Figure 1 - I4-GREEN SUMMARY OF FERTILISATION ACTIVITIES

Making mining green, circular and social through joint investments

An environmental shift requires the deployment of sustainable advanced technologies for the green and circular extraction and processing of raw materials. Besides CO₂ savings and energy efficiency, the re-evaluation of mining dumps, mining waste and tailings as potential sources of strategic materials also entails an opportunity to revive ecosystems that are (often hardly) touched by deindustrialization.

I4-GREEN industrial pilots

I4-GREEN is industry-driven, with two pilots at its core which will deploy circular innovations to the market:

Pilot 1 – Extremadura, Spain – The objective is to create and develop a forefront technology to recover minerals from iron mining waste, reducing environmental impact and alleviating EU dependence.

Pilot 2 – Andalusia, Spain – It will be implemented for scaling up hydrometallurgical leaching of primary sulphide minerals for the sustainable recovery of essential metals for the green transition.

I4-GREEN involved regions and quadruple helix ecosystem

Around these 2 pilots, an interregional system will grow organically with investors, tech partners, regional governments (which bring their own resources to I4-GREEN), and other enablers ready to align regional investments to improve green mining (Figure 2).

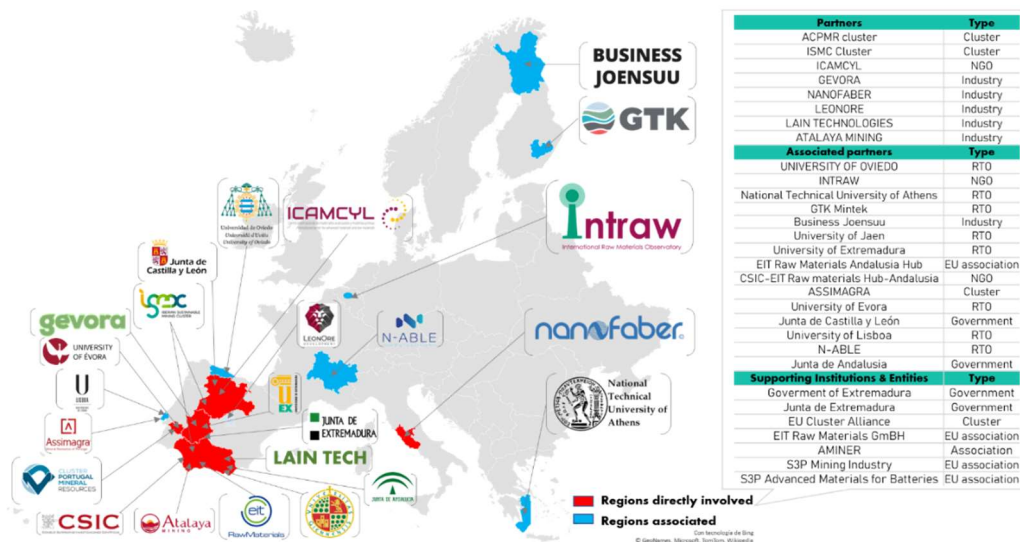


Figure 2 - I4-GREEN INVOLVED REGIONS AND QUADRUPLE-HELIX ECOSYSTEM

Unleashing the green innovation power of EU interregional ecosystems

Not only innovation is necessary, but it must also be developed at a larger scale. Cohesive interregional ecosystems are necessary to build critical mass and leverage complementary capabilities to foster the green transition of EU regions facing similar challenges in mining and extractive industries.

In parallel, and within the overall I4-GREEN project, several actions (Figure 3) will be carried out and are essential and necessary for the success of the final achievement of the entire I4-GREEN project, and they are reflected in the scope of cascade funding actions.

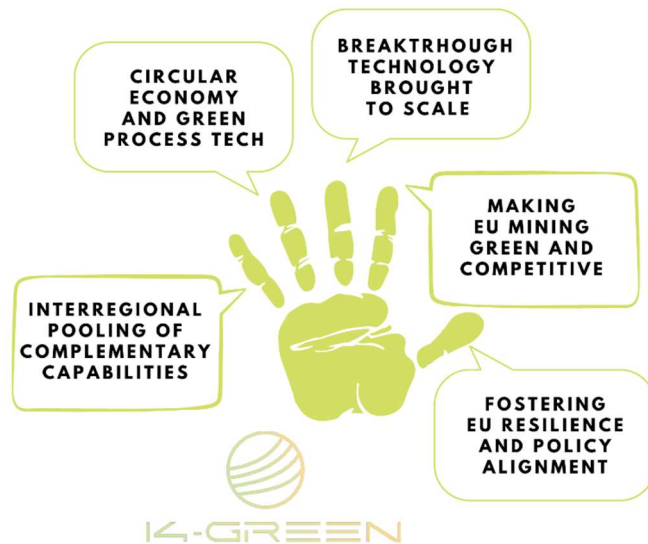


Figure 3 - I4-GREEN KEY ACTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

Cascade funding: SMEs-driven innovation projects

In this development of actions, it is foreseen the establishment of a system of cascade funding for SMEs, for the development of innovation projects within the two industrial pilots of I4-GREEN, with the objective of establishing new interregional and inter-sectoral value chains (Figure 4).

The open and competitive call requires SMEs-driven innovation projects to foster the inclusion of new products, processes and/or technical services in Pilot 1 and Pilot 2 projects.

For this purpose, a budget of up to 448.500,00 € will be available for funding, where up to 15 SMEs will receive up to 30.000,00 € each to develop innovation projects within the two industrial pilots.

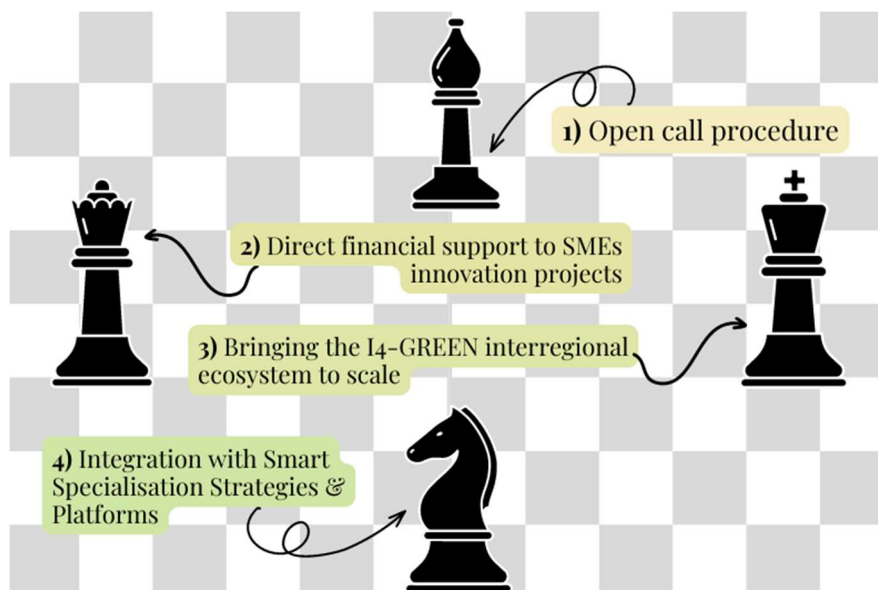


Figure 4 - CASCADE FUNDING ACTION: INTEGRATION IN I4-GREEN PROJECT



1. SECTORS, VALUE CHAIN AND TOPICS TO BE FUNDED

I4-GREEN offers a unique opportunity to contribute to the much-needed transition of the mining industry, its SMEs and corporates. The integration of advanced processing methods, sustainable and environmentally friendly technologies is expected to offer an unprecedented breakthrough that should empower the competitiveness of our industry, supporting directly the I4-GREEN core pilots through innovation vouchers to SMEs' projects awardees. Projects are expected to bring high TRL innovations and solutions ready to be implemented into and implanted into the I4-GREEN industrial pilots, in a **time horizon of 6 months**.

I4-GREEN proposes disruptive technologies that will drive the green transition of mining companies. They tackle current needs of the industry such as resource efficiency, circular models and processes that have not yet been adopted by the sector. Innovation will be synergetic with up to 15 SME innovations plugged into the two pilots and all the RTOs engaged into the I4-GREEN ecosystem. The development and deployment of key, advanced technologies along 2 main demonstration sites where key companies and tech providers (mainly RTOs) will result into a combination with third-party solution and tech developers.

I4-GREEN is industry-driven, with two pilots at its core, in need of deploying circular innovations to improve the sustainable supply of Raw Materials into the EU economy.

Pilot 1 – Extremadura, Spain – The objective is to improve the sustainability of iron ore production and the creation of a circular mine, and to create and develop a forefront technology to recover REE from iron mining waste, while reducing environmental impact and relieving EU dependence on particularly Nd supply. (*See Technical Annex Pilot 1: IHO*)

Pilot 2 – Andalusia, Spain – It will be implemented for scaling up hydrometallurgical leaching of primary sulphide minerals for the sustainable recovery of essential metals for the green transition. (*See Technical Annex Pilot 2: E-LIX*)

The aim of the I4-GREEN Open Call is to provide an opportunity to European SMEs in the target raw materials and mining sectors to develop products, technologies, solutions, and services in collaboration with SMEs from emerging and advanced sectors, and to provide direct financial support to SMEs through innovation vouchers.

I4-GREEN vouchers will be awarded in the form of a cascade funding of up to 30.000,00 € to each project proposal bringing a solution to the major challenges and needs of the I4-GREEN core pilots, described as follows (section 1.1):

1.1. AXIS I: SUSTAINABLE MINING PROCEDURES IN I4GREEN PILOTS; ACHIEVING THE MOST OPTIMAL ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

Pilot 1

Voucher 1a

The project proposal must study the environmental footprint of the pilot, including environmental threats, standards to be implanted, CO₂ footprint, complete Life Cycle Assessment of the pilot and roadmap of actions to achieve the sustainable mining standards. The project proposal must include a methodology to improve logistics and reduce emissions resulting from the transport.

Voucher 1b

The project proposal must bring an exploitation and mining technique analysis for the pilot. The project proposal must rely on the present plans of the pilot and propose the necessary steps and analysis to guarantee the most sustainable solution to extract the raw materials reserves present in the deposit. A deep comparison between underground mining and open pit mining must be included and linked to a techno-economical and sustainability analysis that should include the factors and effects of mobile machinery.

Voucher 1c

The project proposal must propose different laboratory technologies and analysis oriented to valorise the tailings and secondary waste of the pilot. The project proposal must suggest different valorisation solutions and a collection of analysis that lead to either a preliminary plan for recovering other valuable or critical raw materials from the tailings, and/or a method or technology capable of reusing the generated waste in the pilot.

Pilot 2

Voucher 1d

The project proposal must propose a deep study of the environmental safety of the processing systems, technological solutions and innovative plant at the pilot. The project proposal must include a list of risks and mitigation measures of the identified environmental threats, together with a complete Life Cycle Assessment of all the processes stages implemented at the pilot technology. The study must have a focus on the mandatory requirements to comply with all the EU industrial safety regulations, and how the pilot answers and will adapt to such requirements if needed.

1.2. AXIS II: ADVANCED WATER TECHNOLOGIES, AND FOREFRONT READY TO IMPLANT SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE THE WATER FOOTPRINT OF THE PILOTS

Pilot 1

Voucher 2a

The project proposal must present a full water study for the pilot, including details on the technology and the precise process/plant design that will be used to ensure water recycling and reuse. Such study must be coupled to a hydrological assessment in the location of the pilot, identifying and quantifying the available water sources. The design of the project proposal must include a description of the methods and technologies to be applied and how they will be integrated.

Solutions must comply with EU environmental regulations and must ensure that the use of sludge rafts is avoided.

Pilot 2

Voucher 2b

The project proposal must bring a comprehensive innovative water management system engineering design for the processing technology that is scaling up in ATALAYA plants (E-LIX technology). The project proposal must address the assembly and integration of modules or technology solutions at different steps of the water treatment plant projected in the pilot will be also considered. The project proposal solution can focus on bringing innovative improvements making possible the ultrafiltration and osmosis to obtain demineralized water for the process from fresh water in an efficient and sustainable way.

1.3. AXIS III: RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR IMPROVING THE EXTRACTION AND PROCESSING OF RAW MATERIALS; ADVANCED SAFE AND EFFICIENT RAW MATERIALS PROCESSING PLANT DESIGNS

Pilot 1

Voucher 3a

The project proposal must present a preliminary study and engineering design for the processing plant of iron and REE ore. The output of the project proposal must include a diagram of the processing plants required by the pilot, and the study must include a methodology to assess the energy consumption. Global design proposed must comply with an optimized energy consumption approach.

Pilot 2

Vouchers 3b, 3c, 3d and 3e will be oriented to improved elements, design concepts, safety measures and operation elements' design for the creation or the improvement of an innovative processing plant, based on the upscaling E-LIX technology.

Voucher 3b

The project proposal must focus on innovative, resource efficient and sustainable solutions improving or implanting a new engineering design for liquid-solid separation by means of pressurized membrane filtration.

Voucher 3c

The project proposal must define innovative, resource efficient and sustainable solutions improving or implanting a new engineering design for the sedimentation and clarification of the Zn precipitate resulting as part of the process.

Voucher 3d

The project proposal must present innovative, resource efficient and sustainable solutions improving or implanting safety measures at the processing plant. The project proposal must focus on the fire protection system and provide the necessary roadmap of accreditation to comply with EU regulations.

Voucher 3e

The project proposal must focus on the implantation of an innovative, resource efficient and sustainable solution capable of integrating and managing the complete compressed air system at the pilot plant. The project proposal must fit the pilot plant design and demonstrate technical advantages with respect to other standard design and solutions. The project proposal must provide the necessary roadmap of accreditation to comply with EU regulations.

1.4. AXIS IV: APPLYING RENEWABLE ENERGY TO RAW MATERIALS EXTRACTION PROJECTS

Pilot 1

Voucher 4a

The project proposal must design a viable and optimized solution for the renewable energy supply of the mining pilot. The project proposal must include a technical analysis of costs and solutions (techno economical assessment) of the energy supply, with a deep economical comparison between self-generation via the proposed scheme with respect to buying the energy into the market.

Pilot 2

Voucher 4b

Renewable Energy Supply for the processing plant scale up. The project proposal must present a sustainable and highly efficient solar energy plant engineering design coupled and fitted to the operation needs of the processing plant at pilot 2.

⚠ IMPORTANT INFORMATION APPLICABLE TO ALL THE FOUR AXIS: General description of the different sections and stages of the pilots related to the vouchers are given in the [APPENDIX 1: TECHNICAL ANNEXES](#) (Pilot 1: IHO-Extremadura & Pilot 2: E-LIX-Andalusia). Specific parameters that could be required as well as the suitability of the proposed solutions to ensure a perfect fit to the real requirements will be discussed with the companies in an open session (Technical briefing session) for applicants.



2. WHO MAY APPLY & ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR APPLICANTS

I4-GREEN will fund individual innovative projects, according to the following rules:

- a. Applicants must be a SME (Small and Medium-size Enterprise) according to the EU definition¹ (including Public SMEs and start-ups).
- b. Applicants must be SMEs that are established in the S3 participating regions covered by the I4-GREEN Consortium (Figure 5), including partners & associated partners regions (Table 1):

REGIONS	NUTS 2 CODE
Alentejo Region	PT18
Castile and León	ES41
Extremadura	ES43
Lazio	IT14
Community of Madrid	ES30
Andalusia	ES61
Asturias	ES12
Brussels	BE10
Attica	EL3
Northern Ostrobothnia	FI1D
North Karelia	FI1D
Centro Region	PT17
Lisboa Region	PT17
Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes	FRK2

Table 1 - REGIONS ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICANTS IN I4-GREEN; NUTS CODES

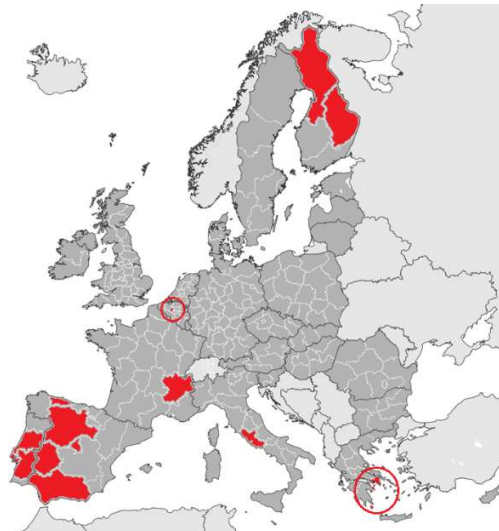
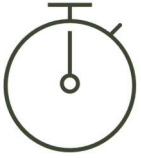


Figure 5 - REGIONS ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICANTS IN I4-GREEN; MAP

- c. A SME is considered eligible for I4-GREEN open call if it complies with ALL the following rules:
 - i. has not been declared bankrupt or have initiated bankruptcy procedures.
 - ii. has no convictions for fraudulent behaviour, other financial irregularities, unethical or illegal business practices.
 - iii. is not under liquidation or an enterprise under difficulty accordingly to the Commission Regulation No 651/2014 art. 2.18.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-definition_en



3. TIMETABLE

I4-GREEN Open Call and awarded projects will follow the timetable described below (Table 1).

Open Call opening date	07/07/2023
Open Call closure date/ Proposal submission deadline	15/09/2023 at 17:00 CET
Evaluation and selection	16/09/2023 – 16/10/2023
Communication of the decision to applicants	20/10/2023 (tentative date)
Project duration	6 months (fixed)
Start of the project	01/11/2023 (tentative start date for all SMEs led projects)
Payment 1	Prefinancing paid (50% of the budget) during the first month of implementation of the funded projects
End of the project	30/04/2024 (unless another date is notified, this end date is fixed)
Final report	The final report must be prepared and submitted within 60 days following the end date of the project
Payment 2	Final payment (50% of the budget) made after the approval of the final report, within 60 days after the report is submitted. ⚠️ The approval of the final report shall be done within 60 days after its submission. Each I4-GREEN Pilot leader company will evaluate if the proposers achieved a successful project conclusion per selected axis and voucher.

Table 2 – I4-GREEN OPEN CALL AND AWARDED PROJECTS TIMETABLE



4. FUNDING CONDITIONS

The possible financial support for any SME in I4-GREEN call is up to 30,000 EUR per SME (Table 3).

Maximum funding per SME	Up to 30.000,00 €
Type of financial support	Lump sum
I4-GREEN Consortium may request additional evidence/documents to assess SME status, including its independence/ownership (please see <i>"Supporting documents", Section 3: SME OWNERSHIP DECLARATION</i>).	
The total amount of direct financial support for SMEs in this Call is up to 448.500,00€. Depending on the quality of the received project proposals, the I4-GREEN Consortium reserve its rights to not distribute the total reserved budget.	

Table 3 – FUNDING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

4.1. ELIGIBLE COSTS

A lump sum funding is a grant based on a pre-fixed lump sum amount and not based on the reimbursement of actual costs. The lump sum must be an approximation of the beneficiaries' underlining actual costs.

It is mandatory to provide an explanation in the project proposals on how the lump sum will be used including a clear budget definition (please see *"Voucher application" section 6: BUDGET DEFINITION*).

The following direct costs, incurred during the project's duration, are eligible:

1. **Direct staff costs** (personnel) hours cost of the staff of the beneficiary that is dedicated to actual work under the development of the project.
2. **Subcontracting costs** (external expertise): work carried out by an external provider which has entered into an agreement on business conditions with the beneficiary. This external provider cannot be one of the Consortium partners. Subcontracting can account for maximum 50% of the beneficiary total budget.
3. **Other costs**: further direct incurred costs can be claimed, like travel expenses, equipment (only depreciation costs), consumables, etc. Purchases or provision of paid services between Consortium partners would not be eligible.

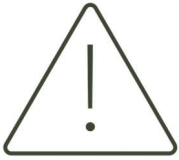
The granting of a lump sum does not foresee the delivery of a detailed financial reporting on actual costs and timesheets. Grantees will be asked to report on outputs considering the technical advancements by I4-GREEN Consortium.

4.2. PAYMENT SCHEME

Successful proposals shall receive the requested financial contribution in the form of a lump sum, following the payment schedule described below (Table 4).

1 st Payment	50% pre-financing paid within 30 days after the signature of the grant
2 nd Payment	50% paid within 60 days after final report is approved by pilot leaders

Table 4 – FUNDED PROJECTS PAYMENT SCHEME



5. ADMISSIBILITY OF PROPOSALS

I4-GREEN applicants must follow the instructions and provide **all the documents** described below (Table 5) and submit them together with the project proposal application form.

Mandatory Documents	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Project proposal application form (“Voucher application”) AND2. All the sections included in the additional documentation for voucher application (“Supporting documents”):<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant profile• Financial declaration• SME ownership declaration• Ethic issues declaration• Applicant state of commitment• Compliance with EU law of protection of data
Language	English is the official language for I4-GREEN open call. Project proposals must be submitted in English. Project proposals submitted in other languages will not be valid. English is also the only official language during the whole execution of the I4-GREEN project. All deliverables must be prepared and submitted in English in order to be valid.
Templates	All templates are available at: https://i3-i4green.eu/index.php/opencall/
Submission	Submission must be done at the online I4-GREEN application platform until 15/09/2023 at 17:00 CET: https://i3-i4green.eu/index.php/opencall/
Warning	Project proposals that do not include ALL mandatory documents will not be valid

Table 5 – MANDATORY DOCUMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS' SUBMISSION

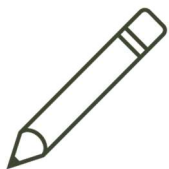
IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

All the signatures requested must be included in the space provided, being only valid:

Option A) Digital signature

Option B) Handwritten signature + stamp of the company

It is highly recommended to submit the project proposal before the deadline to avoid any failures in the platform or technical issues.



6. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

The evaluation procedures are created to pinpoint the most outstanding project proposals based on their excellence, impact, and quality-efficiency of the implementation. The evaluation process aims to be as comprehensive and precise as possible and to assess all the submitted project proposals in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.

6.1. EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

All the submitted project proposals, from all the eligible I4-GREEN regions (table 1), will be evaluated by internal evaluators appointed by the Consortium members. To ensure the independent and fair evaluation process all evaluators will sign a declaration for absence of conflict of interest and non-disclosure agreement.

Evaluation will be divided into **two phases**.

The first phase will judge if the quality of the application matches the overall concept of the project proposal and the applicability to the different sections and stages of each pilot/voucher (see Chapter 2. Sectors, value chain and topics to be funded of this document), also including experience, knowledge and background references of the proposer to the selected axis and voucher. Internal evaluators will emit a motivated score and the participating pilot companies will have a quality vote judging the scope and suitability to the pilot requirements for each project proposal. As a result, an evaluation and a pre-selection of applications for this phase will be announced. This phase will take up to 15 days.

Only pre-selected project proposals will pass to the second phase of evaluation. At this phase I4-GREEN Consortium reserves its rights to declare one or more topic of application as unawarded if the pilots' representatives consider that the project proposal do not properly target and solve with sufficient quality the problems and challenges raised.

The second phase will be performed by internal evaluators whose responsibility will be to evaluate under technical excellence, suitability and applicability degree (table 6). The internal evaluators will give as a result a maximum overall score of 10 points per criterium, with a total threshold of 7/10. Individual criterium thresholds are detailed in table 6. This phase will take up to 15 days.

Table 6 – SECOND PHASE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criteria	Weight	Threshold
SINGULARITY AND EXCELLENCE OF THE CONCEPT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential that this solution provides, and how it is aligned with the activity (axis) needed to be performed for fulfilling pilots' specific requirements. - The project will contribute for reduction of barriers in the interregional ecosystem and real node of the green transformation of extractive industries and sustainable mining value chain. 	20 %	5/10
IMPACT, BENEFITS & IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE SELECTED AXIS & PILOT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suitability of the proposed solution to ensure a perfect fit to the real requirements of the pilots of application. - Alignment of application with the I4-GREEN axis (I to IV). - Convincing description of how the project will have impact and the benefits for the pilot of application and, consequently, for the EU. - Potential contribution to the up-scaling potential of the pilot that applies the solution. - Expected technical results and expected performance in operation of the solution. Operability of the result of the solution applied to the pilot. 	50 %	5/10

ADEQUACY OF THE SCHEME & OTHER RELEVANT ASPECTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of the participant in terms of necessary expertise, knowledge and background references for implementation of the action. - Quality and effectiveness of the work plan. - Balance of the allocation of tasks and use of the budget, ensuring the adequate resources in the project to fulfil the duties presented. 	30 %	5/10

The I4-GREEN Consortium fully respects the professional judgement and expertise of the internal evaluators and the awarded scores to each project proposal. Therefore, at the final ranking stage, the preliminary ranking provided by the evaluators could only be revised by the I4-GREEN Consortium in the case of a tie. In that case, the Consortium will arrange a consensus meeting with the Advisory Board² and decide which solution better applies to the pilot/ voucher technical needs.

⚠ IMPORTANT NOTE: Depending on the quality of the received project proposals, the I4-GREEN Consortium reserves its rights to not distribute the total reserved budget according to the first and/ or second phase of evaluation. **I4-GREEN project will fund a maximum of three projects per voucher ID.** The maximum budget (up to 448.500,00€) for vouchers coverage will be awarded according to the quality and adequacy of the solutions to the pilots' necessities.

The budget will be limited to a maximum of 179.400€ for funding project proposals linked to pilot 1 (IHO-Extremadura) and a maximum budget of 269.100€ for funding project proposals linked to pilot 2 (E-LIX-Andalusia).

After phase 1 and 2 of the evaluation process an **initial ranking list will be established per type of voucher according to the final overall score.** With the first selection of project proposals (per type of voucher) **a second ranking list will refine the selection of projects, taking into consideration the best-scored project proposals per pilot.**

Maximum budget available for funding project proposals	Applicable voucher IDs
For pilot 1: IHO (Extremadura): 179.400€	1a,1b,1c,2a,3a,4a
For pilot 2: E-LIX (Andalusia): 269.100€	1d, 2b, 3b,3c,3d,3e,4b

6.2. EVALUATION TIMELINE

The following is a schematic (Table 7) representation of the evaluation and decision-making process:

	Step description	Timeline
1	Project proposal submitted	Until 15/09/2023 at 17:00 CET
2	Project proposal will be subject to 1st phase of evaluation	16–30/09/2023 (tentative date)
3	Announcement of the pre-selected project proposals	02/10/2023 (tentative date)
3	1 st phase pre-selected project proposals will be subject to 2 nd phase of evaluation	02–16/10/2023 (tentative date)
4	I4-GREEN Consortium decides which project proposals will receive funding based on the evaluation results and prepares ranking lists	17–20/10/2023 (tentative date)
5	Applicants are notified of the funding decisions, and receive feedback on the evaluation of their project proposals	20/10/2023 (tentative date)
6	Applicants are required to sign the Sub-Grant Agreement	23–31/10/2023 (tentative date)
7	Projects start	01/11/2023 (tentative date)

Table 7 - EVALUATION PROCESS SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION

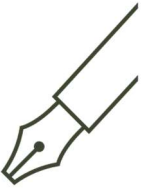
² Advisory Board is composed by external experts responsible for providing essential industrial strategic advice to the Consortium and dynamic perspectives with three major profiles: a. Business-oriented in order to support participating entities; b. Regional with a clear orientation towards smart specialisation strategies and support to innovation and investment; c. Investment-driven to ensure a clear link to green capital and a private investment mindset.

6.3. ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

Project proposals will compete for funding within separate rankings for each voucher ID, following the table below.

AXIS	Pilot	Voucher ID	Description
I	1	1a	The project proposal must study the environmental footprint of the pilot, including environmental threats, standards to be implanted, CO2 footprint, complete Life Cycle Assessment of the pilot and roadmap of actions to achieve the sustainable mining standards. The project proposal must include a methodology to improve logistics and reduce emissions resulting from the transport.
		1b	The project proposal must bring an exploitation and mining technique analysis for the pilot. The project proposal must rely on the present plans of the pilot and propose the necessary steps and analysis to guarantee the most sustainable solution to extract the raw materials reserves present in the deposit. A deep comparison between underground mining and open pit mining must be included and linked to a techno-economical and sustainability analysis that should include the factors and effects of mobile machinery.
		1c	The project proposal must propose different laboratory technologies and analysis oriented to valorise the tailings and secondary waste of the pilot. The project proposal must suggest different valorisation solutions and a collection of analysis that lead to either a preliminary plan for recovering other valuable or critical raw materials from the tailings, and/or a method or technology capable of reusing the generated waste in the pilot.
	2	1d	The project proposal must propose a deep study of the environmental safety of the processing systems, technological solutions and innovative plant at the pilot. The project proposal must include a list of risks and mitigation measures of the identified environmental threats, together with a complete Life Cycle Assessment of all the processes stages implemented at the pilot technology. The study must have a focus on the mandatory requirements to comply with all the EU industrial safety regulations, and how the pilot answers and will adapts to such requirements if needed.
II	1	2a	The project proposal must present a full water study for the pilot, including details on the technology and the precise process/plant design that will be used to ensure water recycling and reuse. Such study must be coupled to a hydrological assessment in the location of the pilot, identifying and quantifying the available water sources. The design of the project proposal must include a description of the methods and technologies to be applied and how they will be integrated. Solutions must comply with EU environmental regulations and must ensure that the use of sludge rafts is avoided.
	2	2b	The project proposal must bring a comprehensive innovative water management system engineering design for the processing technology that is scaling up in ATALAYA plants (E-LIX technology). The project proposal must address the assembly and integration of modules or technology solutions at different steps of the water treatment plant projected in the pilot will be also considered. The project proposal solution can focus on bringing innovative improvements making possible the ultrafiltration and osmosis to obtain demineralized water for the process from fresh water in an efficient and sustainable way.

III	1	3a	The project proposal must present a preliminary study and engineering design for the processing plant of iron and REE ore. The output of the project proposal must include a diagram of the processing plants required by the pilot, and the study must include a methodology to assess the energy consumption. Global design proposed must comply with an optimized energy consumption approach.
	2	Vouchers 3b, 3c, 3d and 3e will be oriented to improved elements, design concepts, safety measures and operation elements' design for the creation or the improvement of an innovative processing plant, based on the upscaling E-LIX technology.	
		3b	The project proposal must focus on innovative, resource efficient and sustainable solutions improving or implanting a new engineering design for liquid-solid separation by means of pressurized membrane filtration.
		3c	The project proposal must define innovative, resource efficient and sustainable solutions improving or implanting a new engineering design for the sedimentation and clarification of the Zn precipitate resulting as part of the process.
		3d	The project proposal must present innovative, resource efficient and sustainable solutions improving or implanting safety measures at the processing plant. The project proposal must focus on the fire protection system and provide the necessary roadmap of accreditation to comply with EU regulations.
		3e	The project proposal must focus on the implantation of an innovative, resource efficient and sustainable solution capable of integrating and managing the complete compressed air system at the pilot plant. The project proposal must fit the pilot plant design and demonstrate technical advantages with respect to other standard design and solutions. The project proposal must provide the necessary roadmap of accreditation to comply with EU regulations.
IV	1	4a	The project proposal must design a viable and optimized solution for the renewable energy supply of the mining pilot. The project proposal must include a technical analysis of costs and solutions (techno economical assessment) of the energy supply, with a deep economical comparison between self-generation via the proposed scheme with respect to buying the energy into the market.
	2	4b	Renewable Energy Supply for the processing plant scale up. The project proposal must present a sustainable and highly efficient solar energy plant engineering design coupled and fitted to the operation needs of the processing plant at pilot 2.



7. HOW TO APPLY

Project proposals are submitted through the I4-GREEN web page. Interested SMEs should be familiar with the submission documents needed and the process to be followed.

The applicant SME submits the project proposal application and additional documents through a web form that will be redirected on the website of the project that can be found at: <https://i3-i4green.eu/index.php/opencall/>.

Project proposals should be submitted on the online I4-GREEN application platform until 15/09/2023 at 17:00 CET.



8. MONITORING PROCEDURES

To receive the lump sum, each project must complete a final report. The assessment report and any related/attached documents must be submitted in English. The final report must be prepared and submitted in the 60 following days after completing the project (the final report must be prepared and submitted within 60 days following the end date of the project, which means, report might be submitted by 30/06/2024)³

The final report must include:

- Summary of results of the project.
- Comparison of what was planned in the project proposal with achieved results/objectives.
- Impact of the project for each beneficiary. Each I4-GREEN Pilot leader company will evaluate if the proposer achieved a successful project conclusion per selected voucher ID.

³ These dates might be susceptible to updates in line with the project timetable and implementation.



9. TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE SUB-GRANT AGREEMENT

9.1. FUNDING DECISIONS

Depending on the declarations made in the project proposal, the I4-GREEN Consortium might ask applicants for additional documentation. Besides, the sub-grant agreement (voucher grant agreement) preparation, signature and redress periods will be very short. Therefore, it is recommended that the applicant contact email is checked on a regular basis.

The list of funded projects will be published on the I4-GREEN webpage.

Changes to the budget in the project proposal cannot occur once the project is selected for funding or during the preparation of the sub-grant agreement.

The selected projects are expected to start by 01/11/2023. It is mandatory that the sub-grant agreement is fully signed before the start of the project.

9.2. COMPLIANCE

Each beneficiary will have a separate funding contract (sub-grant agreement) with I4-GREEN. To sign it, the selected SMEs will need either an official digital signature or a scanned hand-written signature and enterprise stamp.

Awarded SMEs must keep detailed records and supporting documents to prove that they are performing the work in accordance with:

- 1- Technical and scientific stages of the voucher ID (*Chapter 2. SECTORS, VALUE CHAIN AND TOPICS TO BE FUNDED*).
- 2- The sub-grant agreement obligations.

These records include:

- Evidence of expenditures considered in the project proposal.
- Documentation of the overall concept implementation.
- Photos or other audio-visual material listed with adequate explanations/descriptions are essential to provide documentary evidence of the sequence of activities that have affected the project and the work of each beneficiary.

Complementarily, a final report is compulsory to receive the grant. Breaching the sub-grant agreement obligations may result in the cancelation or reduction of the grant.

9.3. REDRESS PROCEDURE

All applicants have a right to a redress procedure if they feel that there has been a shortcoming in the way their project proposal was evaluated, or if they believe that the results of the eligibility checks are incorrect. Project proposals that do not meet the set criteria or that are incomplete will be rejected. Applicants will receive an email stating the reason for rejection if it is requested.

Admissibility of project proposals and eligibility criteria for each proposal are checked by the I4-GREEN Consortium (internal reviewers) before the evaluation begins. Proposals which do not fulfil eligibility criteria or are not valid will not be evaluated. The

redress procedure is only concerned with how the application was handled in the evaluation and eligibility-checking process. It is not an automatic re-evaluation; the judgement of the internal evaluators will not be called into question.

Any redress request must be addressed to I4-GREEN Consortium through the project website contact.

Together with I4-GREEN internal reviewers, the I4-GREEN Coordinator will review the complaint and will recommend an appropriate course of action. This ensures a coherent interpretation of such requests, and equal treatment of all applicants.

Requests must:

- Be related to the evaluation process, or eligibility criteria.
- Include the title of the application, axis, pilot and voucher ID, any relevant other information and a clear description of the grounds for complaint.
- Be received within the time limit specified, i.e., 3 days from the receipt of evaluation verdict/rejection letter.

Please note: The redress procedure is concerned only with the evaluation and/or eligibility checking process. This will not call into question the scientific or technical judgement of appropriately qualified experts.

Only one request for redress per project proposal will be considered. All requests for redress will be treated in confidence.

The evaluation of redress requests may take up to four weeks. The final verdict will be communicated via email to the applicant.

9.4. RESPONSABILITIES OF VOUCHER BENEFICIARIES

The selected SMEs are indirectly beneficiaries of European Commission funding. As such, they are responsible for the proper use of the funding and ensure that the recipients comply with obligations under Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument specific requirements as described in I3 Instrument Work Programme⁴.

In particular, the I4-GREEN partners, in the context of the present Open Call, must ensure to comply with the obligations of the I4-GREEN Grant Agreement related to conflict of interest (Art. 12), confidentiality and security (Art. 13), ethics and values (art.14), data protection (Art. 15), communication and visibility (Art. 17.2), specific rules for carrying out the action (Art. 18), general information obligations (Art. 19) and record keeping (Art. 20).

The sub-grants agreements signed with the awarded entities will contain all the I3 obligations applicable to the awardees. Breaching the agreement obligations may result in the cancelation or reduction of the grant.

⁴https://eisma.ec.europa.eu/programmes/interregional-innovation-investments-i3-instrument_en



10.ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

10.1. DATA MANAGEMENT

To process and evaluate project proposals, I4-GREEN will need to collect Personal and Industrial Data. All project proposals and related data must be submitted through the I4-GREEN website. The I4-GREEN website design and operational procedures ensure that data is managed in compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR)⁵.

Personal data and information are provided in the application form for the immediate purpose of allowing a full and successful evaluation of project proposals. This includes:

- Name of the applicant and contact details of the applicant (telephone number, postal address, country, internet site)
- Name and details of the contact person (e-mail, telephone number)
- VAT registration number of the company
- Financial information of the company (number of employees, annual turnover or balance)

In case that a project is funded, the following additional information of the voucher recipient is required:

- Bank account reference (IBAN and BIC codes).
 - Information about the voucher recipient's representative: Name and surname, position, telephone number, e-mail address, digital signature or signature and company stamp, etc (not exhaustive list).

Please, note that I4-GREEN requests the minimum information needed for respective project proposal application to deliver the evaluation procedures. Additional information (such as bank account details, information for sub-grant agreements) will only be requested if the SMEs' project proposal is selected for funding within the I4-GREEN voucher framework.

Data concerning service providers or third parties involved in the action must be delivered in the application form and in the final reports with the purpose of permitting the evaluation of the action.

Personal data will be processed in compliance with applicable EU and national law on data protection⁶.

The beneficiaries must accept the use of data with the purpose of evaluation. Please, check the I4-GREEN website privacy policy. Before registering, each applicant will accept the I4-GREEN website privacy policy to ensure its coverage.

10.2. FINAL AUDITS AND CONTROL

The selected SMEs are indirectly beneficiaries of European Commission funding. As such, they are responsible for the proper use of the funding and ensure that the

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj>

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/info/aid-development-cooperation-fundamental-rights/your-rights-eu/know-your-rights/freedoms/protection-personal-data_en

recipients comply with obligations under Interregional Innovation Investments (I3) Instrument specific requirements as described in I3 Instrument Work Programme⁷.

The Coordinator or the Commission will – during the implementation of the action or afterwards – check the proper implementation of the action and compliance with the obligations under the sub-grant agreement, including assessing reports. The Coordinator or the Commission may also request additional information. Information provided must be accurate, precise and complete and in the format requested.

The Coordinator or the Commission may – during the implementation of the action or afterwards – carry out reviews and audits on the proper implementation of the action. This will be formally notified to the voucher recipient and will be considered to have started on the date of the formal notification.

Under Regulations No 883/2013 and No 2185/96 (and in accordance with their provisions and procedures), the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) may – at any moment during implementation of the action or afterwards – carry out investigations, including on-the-spot checks and inspections, to establish whether there has been fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the financial interests of the EU.

10.3. CONTACT POINTS

For any enquires regarding the I4-GREEN project please contact:

 CLUSTER PORTUGAL MINERAL RESOURCES	 ICAMCYL Centro Internacional de Inovação e Sustentabilidade International center for advanced sustainable and green technology
ACPMR geral@clustermineralresources.pt	ICAMCYL projects@icamcyl.com

⁷ https://eisma.ec.europa.eu/programmes/interregional-innovation-investments-i3-instrument_en

APPENDIXES

I. INDUSTRIAL I4-GREEN CORE PILOTS PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND KEY TECHNOLOGIES TO APPLY

II. HOW TO APPLY FOR I4-GREEN FUNDING

APPENDIX I: INDUSTRIAL I4-GREEN CORE PILOTS PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND KEY TECHNOLOGIES TO APPLY: TECHNICAL ANNEXES.

- TECHNICAL ANNEX PILOT 1: IHO (EXTREMADURA)
- TECHNICAL ANNEX PILOT 2: E-LIX (ANDALUSIA)

TECHNICAL ANNEX PILOT 1: IHO (EXTREMADURA)



I4 GREEN Technical Info. IHO Pilot



IRON HOLM OAK, is one of the pilots developed inside the I4 GREEN PROJECT, Interregional investment for the sustainable supply of raw materials in the EU Green Energy Transition. IHO pilot, aims to create a European lighthouse of forefront technology for the circular sustainable recovery of rare earth minerals from the tailings of the iron ore process.

RAW MATERIAL DEPOSITS

The mineral deposits are inside "The Iron District of the Southwest of the Iberian Peninsula", a large strip of iron ore with more than 120 km in length and 40 km wide, covering the three mentioned regions.

"The Iron District" is a mineralization of the Lower Cambrian period with "Skarn" type deposits corresponding to metamorphic rocks in contact with igneous zones and carbonate and intrusive acidic rocks.

The main massive body of the mineralization is iron ore where magnetite represent the main content as magnetic iron. Minors levels of hematite and accessories sulphides are observed. The sulphides are mainly associated to pyrite, pyrrhotite and chalcopyrite.

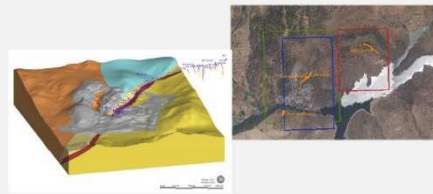
Throughout the different feasibility works carried out, associated with the massive magnetite bodies, interesting levels of monazite, a mineral rich in REE, have been found.

PILOT DEPOSIT

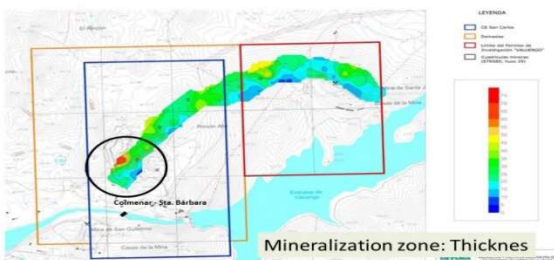
Within this district, a mining concession has been selected in the Extremadura Region, thanks to the high level of development and studies carried out previously.

Characteristics of the deposit;

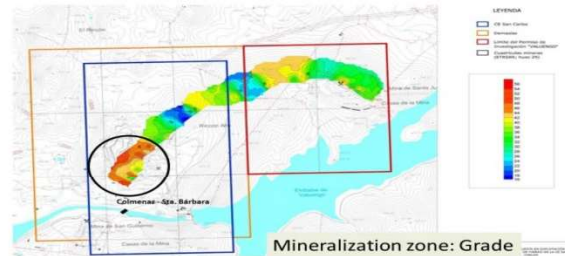
- Mineral resources; 58 Mill Mt
- Main Mineral; Magnetite
- Iron Ore content; 38 % Fe
- REE mineral; Monazite
- REE content; 0,3% (considering the 4 more relevant elements)



MINERALIZATION



MINERAL GRADES



WATER

The project has important water reserves in the proximity thanks to clean water ponds originally designed to serve local agriculture and livestock but currently practically in disuse.

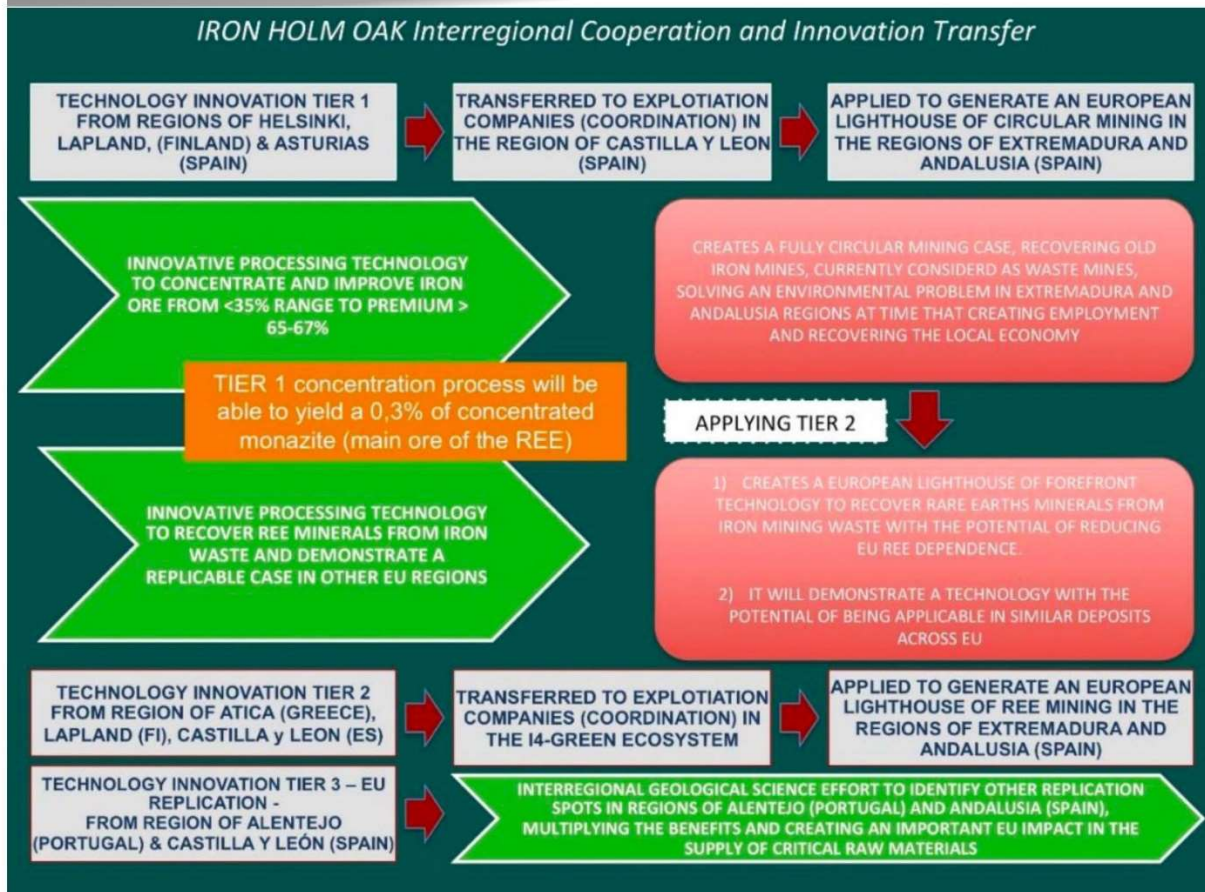


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Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or EISMEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



PROJECT MAIN FIGURES



STRATEGY

Water recycling

Green Energy

Sustainable operation

Automation & digitization

Sustainable mobility

Circular Recovery

PROJECT FUNDAMENTALS

- Recycling of process water for reinjection into the operating circuit, avoiding the need for waste ponds
- Consumption of clean energy, prioritizing renewable energy sources installed in the proximity of the project
- Selection of mining techniques, open pit and underground, that reduce the impact of the mining operation on the environment
- Intelligent design of digitized process plants that allow efficient use of water, energy and the recovery of the products of interest
- Designing an efficient distribution of exploitation, storage and disposal areas using means of transport that reduce the carbon footprint
- Circular use of mining resources and tailings to produce saleable strategic mineral and industrial materials

TECHNICAL ANNEX PILOT 2: E-LIX (ANDALUSIA)

BACKGROUND

The **E-LIX Process** is a novel hydrometallurgical method for leaching primary sulphide minerals such as chalcopyrite and sphalerite. Primary sulphide minerals are currently processed by pyrometallurgical methods. However, there is an argument to be made for a shift to hydrometallurgy, motivated by economic and environmental drives.

The E-LIX Process was devised while Dr. Eva Lain was conducting PhD research at the Centre for Research in Electrochemical Science and Technology, within the Department of Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology at the University of Cambridge (England).

The idea was developed initially as laboratory bench tests and was refined over the years, going through a number of stages until reaching industrial practicality. The scale was sequentially increased from large laboratory size tests to small pilot tests. Finally, a larger pilot plant was built and has been successfully run continuously.

The E-LIX Process was developed by Lain Technologies (“Lain Tech”), founded by Dr. Eva Lain with the financial support of Atalaya Mining (100% owned of Proyecto Riotinto). Over a period of six years, Atalaya and Lain Tech conducted continuous testing of the process including through the development of a semi-industrial pilot plant in 2019. In June 2021, Atalaya’s Board of Directors, following a feasibility study approved the construction of the first phase of an industrial-scale plant using the E-LIX Process to produce high value copper and zinc metals from the complex sulphide concentrates sourced from Proyecto Riotinto in the South of Spain.

The E-LIX Process has shown the potential to unlock the significant value from the polymetallic sulphides contained within Atalaya’s mineral resources, including: the polymetallic deposits of San Dionisio, San Antonio, Masa Valverde and Majadales, all of which are located in the Iberian Pyrite Belt and within trucking distance of Proyecto Riotinto’s 15 Million tonnes/year processing facility.

Historical applications of differential flotation within the Iberian Pyrite Belt in Spain and Portugal have typically resulted in recoveries of 60-80% into concentrates for complex copper-zinc polymetallic sulphides, with even lower recoveries historically reported for lead, silver and gold. The use of hydrometallurgical systems, such as E-LIX, has demonstrated that base metal recoveries of over 90% can be achieved.

The estimated capex for the hydromet plant is 15M€ and the design allows for unlimited capacity expansion through the addition of multiple lines in parallel. The project pilot execution has already started and it is expected to be operational before by the second half – year of 2023, including commissioning.

The plant capacity has been designed to produce between 5,000-10,000 t of copper or zinc metal per year depending on the ratio of copper to zinc in the concentrate feed.

PILOT EXECUTION

Atalaya will provide all the available infrastructure (water, power, general services, etc.) and LainTech will supervise the EPCM and will commission and operate the plant. Atalaya will also provide support in everything related to the permits required to build & operate the plant.

The pilot execution is moving forward, with the following tasks ongoing Process engineering:

- Basic design engineering
- Detailed design engineering
- Procurement
- Construction
- Commissioning
- Operation

The permitting process is moving forward as planned. There are two significant advantages that require a special mention:

- The Pilot is located within an operating mine, in a famous mining region where mining has been around for centuries. The current operating mine footprint is much bigger than the E-LIX Pilot and from the permitting point of view, amount others, there are clear synergies that would make the process easier, hence quicker.
- The regional Government (Junta de Andalucia) has officially considered the E-LIX Pilot as strategic for the Region, which means that all they will put all the effort to speed the process up.

LainTech will supply competent and experienced project personnel to execute the works within time, budget and to the required quality standard expected for the E-LIX pilot . Part of the Pilot's Team is already in place.

The Pilot Execution will dictate the procedures to execute the project. The budget, schedule and design criteria tools will be review and updated as required.

The procurement process has followed the tasks described below:

- Equipment supply packages (mechanical & electrical) - adjudication and placement of down payments on long lead items on the critical path.
- Site erection packages (Earthworks and civils; Liner supply & installation; Structural Steelwork, Mechanical Installation, Piping and Platework (SMPP); Electrical, Control & instrumentation (E & I)) - further definition of Bills of Quantities (BoQ's).

A HSSE policy will be prepared to assure personnel health and safety, minimise harm to the environment, and satisfy Customer needs.

The overall goal of LainTech is to protect people, equipment, and the environment as stated in the Company HSSE policy. LainTech will work with the stakeholders to achieve the "Zero incidents & accidents".

APPENDIX II: HOW TO APPLY FOR I4-GREEN FUNDING

Access to I4-GREEN website through: <https://i3-i4green.eu/index.php/opencall/> .

Read carefully call instructions documents and download application documents. Once you have filled in all the templates, click on “GO TO MINE.THE.GAP PLATFORM TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL” (See the screenshot in Figure 6).

Open call - I4-GREEN EUROPEA! x +

13-i4green.eu/index.php/opencall/

HOME ABOUT US PILOTS OPEN CALL CONSORTIUM

Open Call

I4-GREEN is closely collaborating with the project MINE.THE.GAP which provides the digital platform to submit applications for the I4-GREEN Open Call.

I4-GREEN will provide financial support and services to up to 15 SMEs deploying new products, processes and/or technical services into the IHO pilot (Iron Holm Oak – PILOT 1, located in Extremadura, Spain) and E-LIX pilot (PILOT 2, located in Andalusia, Spain).

- 1 READ CAREFULLY THE CALL INSTRUCTIONS
CALL ANNOUNCEMENT
GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS
FAQ
- 2 DOWNLOAD, FILL IN AND SIGN APPLICATION TEMPLATE DOCUMENT
APPLICATION TEMPLATE
- 3 DOWNLOAD, FILL IN AND SIGN THE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS FOR APPLICATION
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR APPLICATION
- 4 FILL IN ALL APPLICATION FORM
VIA MINE.THE.GAP PLATFORM
- 5 UPLOAD DOCS & SUBMIT
DEADLINE 15/09/2023

The Open Call contains all the documents needed for understanding and includes all the Call conditions (Call announcement, Guide for applicants & FAQ) and for submitting proposals for the Open Call (Application template & Supporting documents for application).

CALL INSTRUCTIONS DOCUMENTS HERE

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS HERE

The final goal is to promote technology transfer, services, and products into targeted sectorial SMEs and to promote cluster collaboration tools involving business services and financial support to SMEs in the ecosystem.

GO TO MINE.THE.GAP PLATFORM TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL

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GA 10108402B - I4-GREEN

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Contact us

The I4-GREEN project is coordinated by [ACPMR – ASSOCIACAO CLUSTER PORTUGAL MINERAL RESOURCES](#).
geral@clustermineralresources.pt

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Open call
Consortium

Figure 6 - I4-GREEN WEBSITE: OPEN CALL PREVIEW

You will be then redirected to MINE.THE.GAP website. Through this platform you will complete your submission. Click on “APPLY FOR THE I4-GREEN OPEN CALL” (See the screenshot in Figure 7).

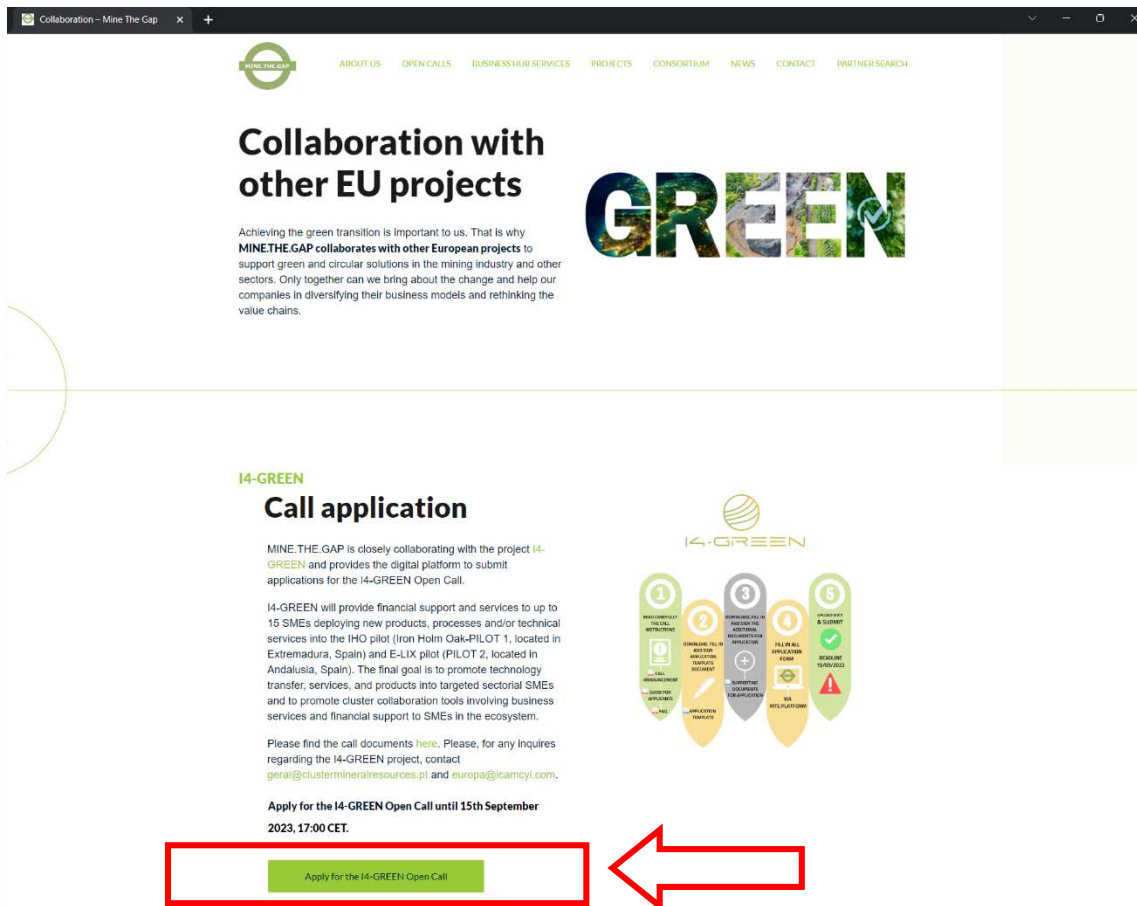


Figure 7 – MINE.THE.GAP WEBSITE: SUBMISSION FOR I4-GREEN APPLICATIONS PREVIEW

Read carefully all the requirements and fill in the fields contained in the form. You will be guided through the 7 steps needed to complete your submission (see screenshot in Figure 8).

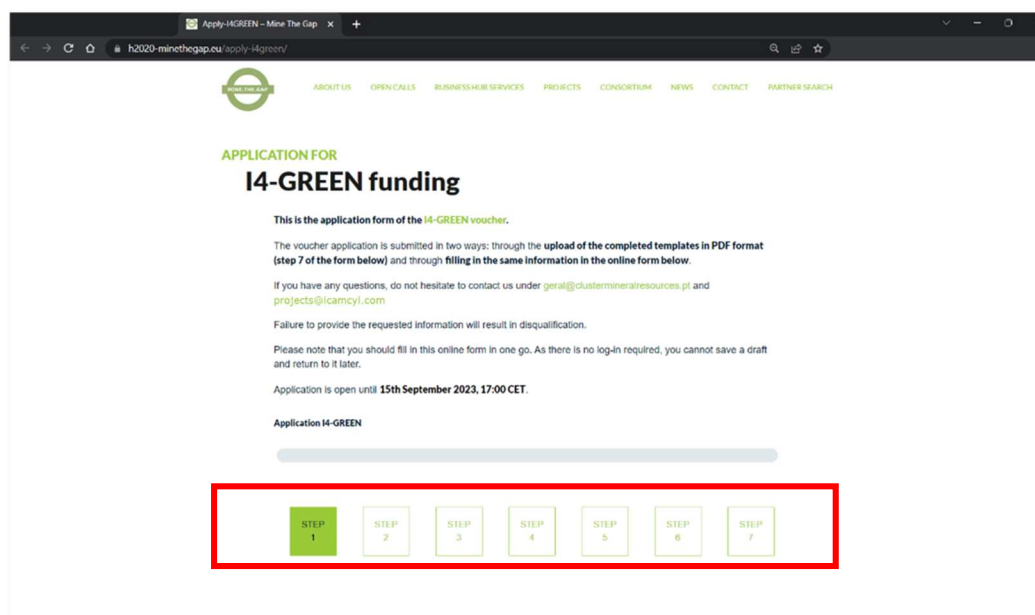


Figure 8 – MINE.THE.GAP WEBSITE: SUBMISSION FOR I4-GREEN APPLICATIONS PREVIEW

After completing all the form, during the STEP 7, you will need to submit the voucher application and supporting documentation, as described in chapter 6, “**MANDATORY DOCUMENTS FOR THE PROPOSALS TO BE ELIGIBLE**”. Once all the fields are completed and the documents are uploaded, click on “SUBMIT” (see screenshot in Figure 9).

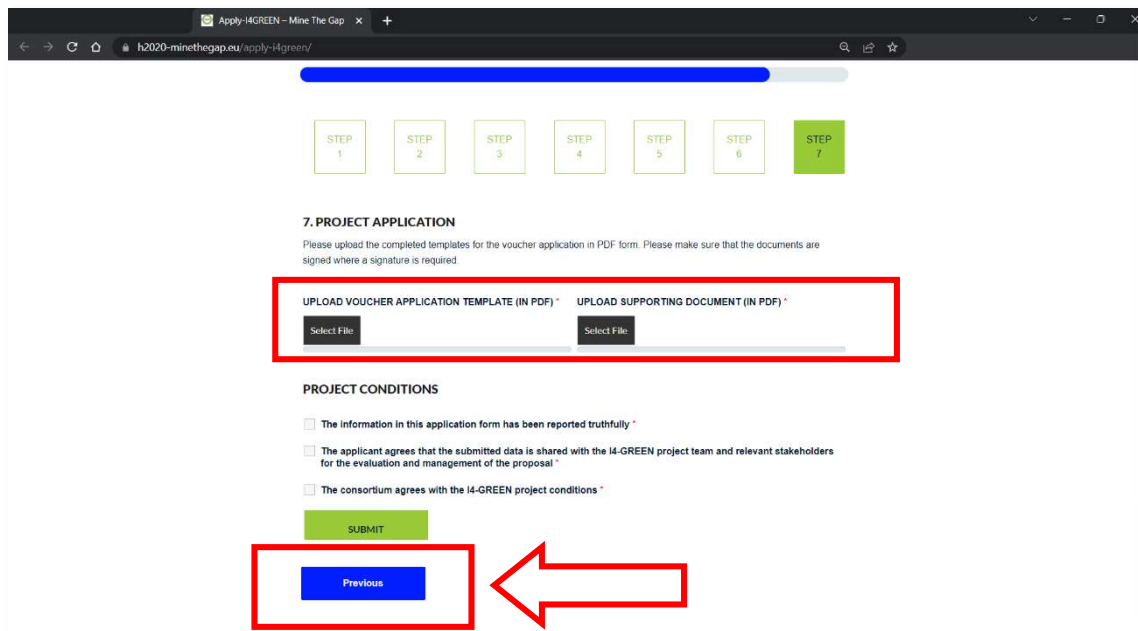


Figure 9 – MINE.THE.GAP WEBSITE: FINAL STEP OF SUBMISSION FOR I4-GREEN APPLICATIONS

You will receive an email confirming the application you have submitted.